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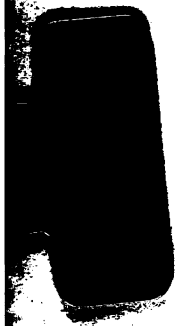
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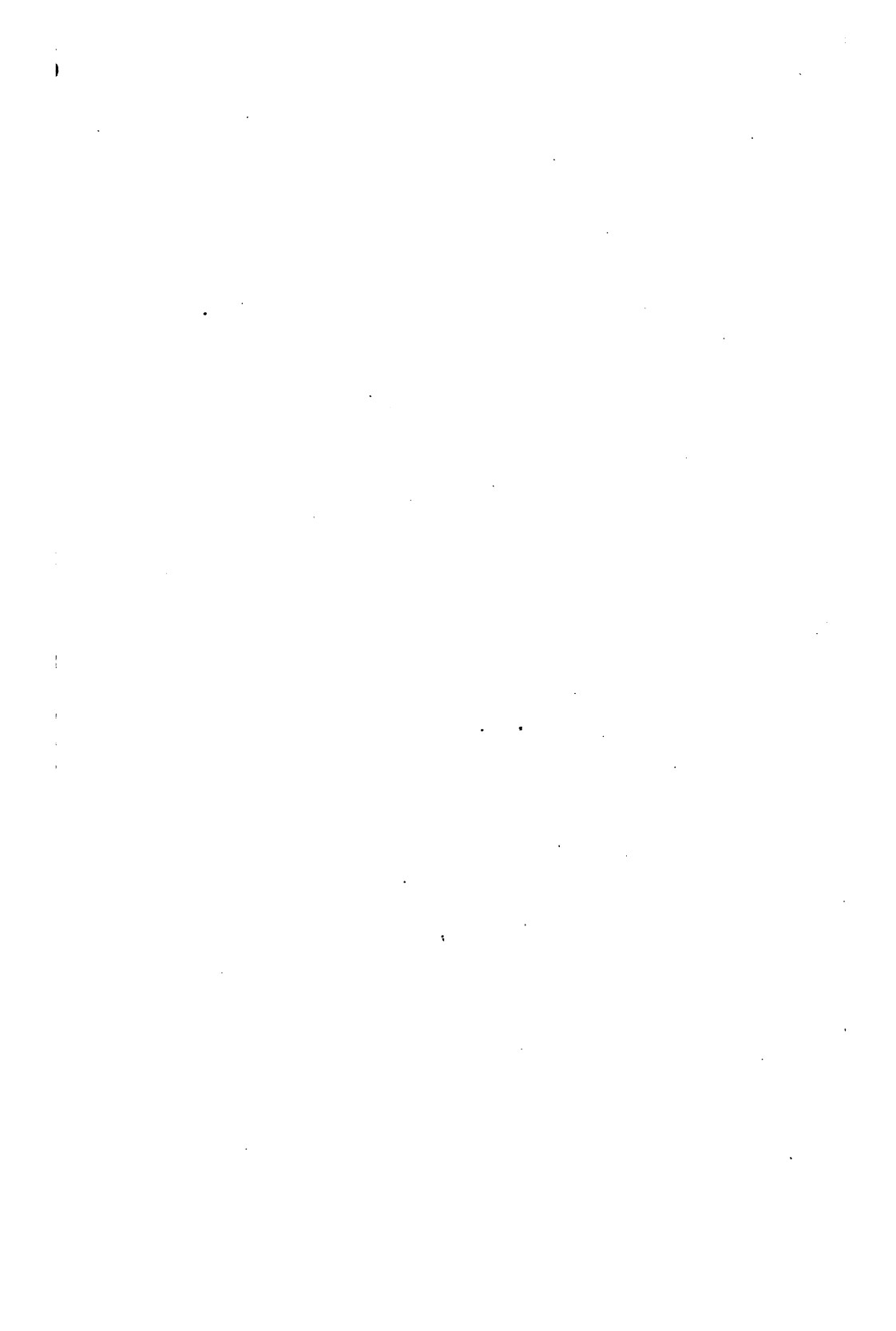
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CHANCELLOR'S PRIZE ESSAY

THE
INFLUENCE OF THE SCHOOLMEN
UPON
MODERN LITERATURE

A Prize Essay

READ IN THE SHELDONIAN THEATRE, OXFORD, JUNE 13, 1877

BY ROBERT JOCELYN ALEXANDER, B.A.

BRASENOSÉ COLLEGE

*Being the Essay which obtained the Chancellor's Prize in the University
of Oxford for the year 1877*

'Non omnis moriar'

'Il faut que quelque chose subsiste du passé, ni trop ni trop peu, qui
devienne le fondement de l'avenir'—COUSIN



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To avoid the pedantry of perpetual quotation, a list is here given of some of the principal authors consulted.

When information has been more directly obtained from Scholastic writings, references are given in the notes.

Works of Sir James Mackintosh.—Vol. i. *Retrospect of Scholastic Ethics*.

Jourdain.—*La Philosophie de St. Thomas d'Aquin*.

Cousin.—*Fragments Philosophiques*. Par. v. 'Philosophie Scholastique. Abelard.'

Sharon Turner.—*Hist. of England*, vol. iv.

Hallam.—*Literary History*.

Ozanam.—*Dante*. Troisième Partie.

Victor le Clerc et Ernest Renan.—*Histoire Littéraire de la France au quatorzième Siècle*. (Particularly vol. i., Deuxième Partie.)

Paul Lacroix.—*Science et Lettres au Moyen-âge et à l'époque de la Renaissance*.

Remains of Bishop Copleston.

H. D. C. Maret, Docteur en Théologie et Chanoine Honoraire de Paris.—*Théodicée Chrétienne*. (Particularly pp. 53 to 86.)

L. Bautain, Professeur de Philosophie à l'Académie de Strasbourg.—*Philosophie du Christianisme*, pp. 44 to 142.

Dean Milman.—*Latin Christianity*, vol. ix.

Janet.—*Histoire de la Philosophie Morale et Politique*.

Hauréau.—*La Philosophie Scholastique*.

Ullmann.—*Reformers before the Reformation*, vol. i. chap. ii.

Taylor.—*Logic in Theology*.

St. George Mivart.—*Lessons from Nature*. (Particularly chap. xiv.)

Fuller.—*Church History*, Book iii. chap. xiv.

INFLUENCE OF THE SCHOOLMEN
UPON
MODERN LITERATURE.

Non omnis moriar.

Il faut que quelque chose subsiste du passé, ni trop ni trop peu, qui devienne le fondement de l'avenir.—COUSIN.

In the Library belonging to one of our Cathedrals,¹ there exists, on the title-page of a Scholastic volume, the following epigram in the handwriting of Sir Henry Wotton :—

Opening
remarks.

Qui habet Jo^m Bachonum, habet omnes Scholasticos :—
Qui habet omnes Scholasticos, habet nihil.²

The last line may be considered to express, in a terse form, the opinion of most modern writers. This depreciation of the Schoolmen springs, at least in some degree, from the fact that there is nothing new to be learnt from them—unless, indeed, it be a lesson of humility. It does not, however, follow that they have exerted no abiding influence on thought, or that Modern Literature could have assumed its present form without their assistance. A man who can read may choose to forget the spelling-book to

Deprecia-
tion of the
Schoolmen.

¹ Armagh Cathedral.

² The John Bacon here mentioned is more commonly known as Bacon-thorpe. Among other works he wrote a *Commentary on the Four Books of Sentences*. He was called 'Doctor Resolutus,' and died in London 1346.

which he owes his proficiency. He can well afford to do so, since it is of no further use to him. His obligation will nevertheless remain the same.

Necessity
of fixing
their lite-
rary posi-
tion.

When a parallel principle comes to be applied to a whole race of thinkers, many of whom died comparatively¹ young from excessive toil in the service of humanity, it is well to point out the place which they occupy in the long pedigree of literature, and to trace some of their lineaments on the face of modern thought.

Prelimi-
nary steps.

Before discussing directly their influence upon Modern Literature, it is necessary to form such a general estimate of Scholasticism as shall be sufficient for the purpose in view.

A short de-
finition.

Many definitions may be summed up in one,² by describing Scholasticism as a philosophical theology or a theological philosophy, in which the philosophy or theology preponderated according to the bias of the individual writer. No mere definition of any great system, however, affords sufficient light by which to examine its complicated influences. We must endeavour to fix our eyes upon Scholasticism in all its bearings, as it existed in the Middle Ages—a bright light, radiating out heat to the surrounding atmosphere, from which it in turn received colour.

Scholasti-
cism exam-
ined with
a view to
tracing its
influences
on litera-
ture.

One of its most striking attributes, and one which

¹ St. Thomas Aquinas was in his 48th year, Duns Scotus in his 43rd, at the time of his death. Many others, the date of whose birth is uncertain, died so soon after coming under public notice that it may very fairly be conjectured that they did not live to a great age.

² Hallam's *Lit. Hist.* He divides Scholasticism into Philosophy and Divinity. Petronius first made use of the word Scholasticism. Jerome says that Serapion first received, as an honour, the title of Scholiast. From the commencement of the Middle Ages it was given to all teachers of youth. Taken objectively, it qualified what they taught.—Heuman. *Præfatio ad libr. De doct. Schol.* Further definitions are given in Sharon Turner's *Hist. of England*, vol. iv.; Milman's *Latin Christianity*; Jourdain, *Esquisse de la Philosophie Scholastique avant St. Thomas*.

has been much overlooked, is an intense yearning for universality—for an all-sufficient explanation, a gigantic synthesis. From the very beginning the *trivium* and *quadrivium* gave earnest of aspiration after a system which was to embrace all known departments of learning. It is thus that we find so many doctors of the most different opinions contained in the truly catholic bosom of this great philosophy¹—the angelic, the seraphic, the invincible, the most resolute. Even Roger Bacon was duly sealed and registered as her own by the school, under the gorgeous title of ‘*Doctor admirabilis*.’

Aspiration
after uni-
versality.

It would evidently be impossible even to enumerate the many elements comprehended in this claim to universality. The ‘*doctores novi*’ and the ‘*doctores antiqui*,’ the conflicting disputants upon the reality of universals² and the cognate question of individuation,³ the Imperial-

Various
elements.

¹ Sharon Turner gives the following list:—

The Irrefragable	Alexander Hales.
The Angelical	Thomas Aquinas.
The Seraphic	Bonaventura.
The Wonderful	Roger Bacon.
The most Profound	Ægidius of Colonna.
The most Subtle	Duns Scotus.
The most Resolute	Durand.
The Invincible	Ockham.
The Perspicuous	Walter Burley.
The most Enlightened	Raymond Lully.

² The sentence of Porphyry, which gave rise to the whole dispute between the Nominalists and Realists, was translated as follows by Boethius:—‘*Mox de generibus et speciebus illud quidem, sive subsistant sive in solis nudis intellectibus posita sint, sive subsistentia corporalia sint an incorporalia, et utrum separata a sensibilibus an in sensibilibus posita et circa hæc consistentia, dicere recusabo.*’ The Greek which is thus rendered runs as follows:—*Αὐτίκα περὶ γένων τε καὶ εἰδων, τὸ μὲν εἴτε ὑφέστηκεν εἴτε καὶ ἐν μόναις ψιλαῖς ἐπινοίαις κείται, εἴτε καὶ ὑφεστηκότα σώματὰ ἐστὶν ἢ ἀσώματα καὶ πότερον χωριστὰ ἢ ἐν τοῖς αἰσθητοῖς καὶ περὶ ταῦτα ὑφεστῶτα παραιτήσομαι λέγειν βαθυτάτης οὐσης τῆς τοιαύτης πραγματείας, καὶ ἕλλης μείζονος δεομένης ἐξετάσεως.*

³ Jourdain, *La Philosophie de St. Thomas d'Aquin*, vol. ii. pp. 77, 78.

ists and Papists, the Mystics and Logicians,¹ pass across a field which is already crowded with figures. Proof will be given as we proceed that many of the ideas struck out in the clash of these various elements—preserved across the general darkness of the Middle Ages, and worked out with fresh applications—still exist as living influences. Occasionally they may be found almost in their original forms, isolated waifs from a lost civilisation of letters; more often they appear as fresh inspirations in the glowing style of modern writers, when they are in reality little more than mere reminiscences.

Compass of
scholastic
works.

This aspiration after universality is clearly illustrated by the aim and compass of the great mediæval writings. What theologian of that period cared to affix his name to anything less than a 'Summa?'—and what a 'Summa Theologiæ' meant may easily be ascertained by a glance at the superb work of St. Thomas Aquinas. For him theology was the science of God, of man, of nature. He treats of everything, from the Almighty Himself down to the lowliest atom, with consummate good sense, in words that are weighty, precise, and bright as steel. The characteristic of his style is metallic density. It has no other glitter than that which is inseparable from sharpness. His book is a fine specimen of the advantages and disadvantages of Scholasticism. Not inaptly has it been compared to one of those vast cathedrals, its contemporaries. Like many of them it too has remained unfinished,² to attest at once the power and impotence of humanity.

It is directly to our present purpose to observe that

¹ Although these two parties are generally placed in opposition, the Mystics were often severe Logicians. Trithemius says of Eckard, 'Vir in divinis scripturis eruditus et in philosophia Aristotelica omnium suo tempore doctissimus.'—*De Script. Eccles.* c. DXXXVII.

² St. Thomas died without having finished the *De Reg. Prin.*

Scholastic authors were not always orthodox, like St. Thomas. No greater mistake could be made than to look upon this form of philosophy as a mere adjunct to the Roman Catholic Church, which made such marvellous use of her adversaries' weapons. It was, from its commencement, the first insurrection against authority.¹ Roscelin and Abelard were suspected heresiarchs. A number of erroneous opinions were condemned at Paris in 1270. Many of these were derived from Jewish or Arabic currents of thought, which, running at first on a parallel course of development, had finally joined the western stream before that period. Scholasticism was thus the first origin of that principle of living progress termed by the French 'le libre examen,' which, after the Renaissance and Reformation, was to culminate in the unbounded liberty of Modern Literature.

The first
insurrec-
tion against
authority.

These two great movements have undoubtedly played an important part in the formation of literature. It is, nevertheless, true that they are only the most tangible links in a series of phenomena dating much further back. On attentive consideration it will become apparent that the Renaissance of letters really gave few important new ideas to the philosophical world. The Scholiasts were in possession of nearly all the great thoughts of Aristotle and Plato,² with many of the more recent illustrations of the

The
Renaissance.

¹ Berenger, *De sacra Cæna*, edit. Vischer, Berolini (1834), p. 100: 'Ratione agere in perceptione veritatis incomparabiliter superius esse, quia in evidenti res est, sine vecordia cecitate nullus negaverit.' Even St. Anselm endeavours to do without authority, as he himself tells us: 'Quidam fratres sæpe me studioseque precati sunt, ut quædam quæ illis de meditando divinitatis essentia protuleram, sub quodam eis meditationis exemplo describerem, cujus scilicet scribendæ meditationis . . . hanc mihi formam præstiterunt, quatenus auctoritate scripturæ penitus nihil in ea persuaderetur; sed quidquid per singulas investigationes finis assereret, id ita esse plano stylo et vulgaribus argumentis simplicique disputatione et rationis necessitas breviter cogeret, et veritatis claritas patenter ostenderet.'—*Monologium*, Præf.

² Vide *Sources de la Doctrine de St. Thomas*, Jourdain, p. 441. St.

Alexandrian school. The real debt which modern Europe owes to the classical revival is style—not mere accuracy, but the picturesque and beautiful use of words. The Latin of the Schoolmen is generally barbarous, ‘counting anything eloquent that is expressive.’ Even had an attempt been made to render it into the vulgar tongue, the effects upon literature must have been very different from the elegance naturally resulting from translations of first-rate Latin and Greek authors.

Reforma-
tion origi-
nates par-
tially in
the
Schools.

The Reformation, it is now acknowledged, had been preparing for a long time in the Schools. The Nominalists, proscribed at Paris, fled to Germany. There, the opinions of Ockham and his disciples, which had done so much to discredit ecclesiastical pretensions, and to consign to oblivion the species and phantoms of orthodox theologians, found their final expression in the doctrine of that other Nominalist,¹ Luther. In England, more especially at Oxford, there were early signs of an inclination towards what may be termed, by a slight anachronism, Reformation ideas.² Merton—a house not less distinguished for philosophical and theological speculations in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries than Oriel became in the generation immediately preceding our own—produced a succession of illustrious names. Among others, William Ockham was bred there, and the Bishop Bradwardine, whom Chaucer has deemed worthy to rank with

Thomas says (‘In Catenam sup. Marci Evangelio Epist. dedicat.,’ *Opp.* vol. iv. p. 499): ‘Quasdam expositiones doctorum Græcorum in Latinum feci transferri.’ St. Thomas cannot actually be shown to have possessed much of Plato, but he so frequently uses Platonic ideas that it is evident that his information concerning this writer, from indirect sources, must have been great. See Jourdain.

¹ ‘This Ockham was Luther’s chief (if not sole) Schoolman, who had his works at his finger’s ends.’—Fuller’s *Church History of Britain*, vol. i. p. 402. Cousin’s *Fragments Philosophiques*, p. 307.

² Rémusat, *Preface to Bacon*.

Boethius and St. Augustine.¹ A well-known French writer considers that his work on 'The Will,' addressed 'Ad suos Mertones,' did much to predispose England to Protestantism. However this may be, it is certain that John Wycliffe found Bradwardine's teaching still quite fresh at Merton. The Father of the English Reformation was also a great student of Ockham, and marks in England, as Luther did in Germany, the close connection between the Reformation and Nominalist opinions.² Whatever merit, therefore, is due to the Reformation as regards the general culture and tone of thought, which speedily becomes embodied in literature, must be considered, in the last analysis, as belonging in no small degree to the Schoolmen.

Wycliffe a student of Ockham.

It is not always easy to trace the influence of Scholasticism directly, except in some few remarkable instances. If, however, the channels of communication are many, and the continuity of writers unbroken between the rise of the modern era and the Scholastic period, it is but reasonable to suppose that, in cases of striking similarity, some transfusion of ideas has taken place. True origination is one of the rarest accidents which ever happen to the human mind. Moreover, experience tells us that a thought once known to any section of the republic of letters is communicated to all by methods of percolation so subtle as almost to defy analysis. It is, therefore, by no means necessary to prove that an author actually had a book in his hand to convict him of derivation of ideas, if it can be shown that the work was known to a considerable number of his contemporaries, or that this par-

Necessary links.

¹ 'But I ne cannot boult it to the bren,
As can the holy Doctour St. Austin,
Or Boece, or the Bishop Bradwardin.'

Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales*.

² Ullmann considers that the Mystics also contributed largely to hasten on the Reformation in Germany.

ticular thought had already become incorporated with the general current of literature.

Preservation of Scholastic writings.

Scholasticism has been continued both by the survival of writings in their integral form, and also by gradual absorption into, and assimilation with, external forces. No attempt to trace the influence of Scholasticism can be established on a firm basis until the general links of connection are realised as historical facts. The actual preservation of the great philosophical and theological works of mediæval Christendom by the Roman Catholic Church in her convents and libraries is a fact too notorious to need any special proof. Her most learned ecclesiastics have never ceased to mingle in the world of letters. Thus, doubtless, they have transmitted many ideas, which they originally acquired from the perusal of St. Thomas Aquinas or some other famous Schoolman. The study of these writers has been continued by such of the separatists from this great mother of theology as consider that if God does not require the learning of men, He has still less need of their ignorance. It is not only thus that a learning which was once universal survives. Across the Sixteenth Century¹ (an age of great imitators, but not of great original thinkers), Scholasticism appears fighting for existence. In that mortal struggle it often takes exaggerated and grotesque forms, becomes gradually fused with other elements, and finally disappears. It disappears, not because it is lost, but because it is completely mingled with the other streams which combine in the broad modern river. In Italy and Spain it lingered long. In the latter country,² we find writers expressing the opinions

Assimilation of Scholasticism with other forces.

¹ 'On est savant avec plus ou moins d'imagination et d'enthousiasme; on imite à tromper les plus habiles; on est plein d'esprit; on a peu de génie. Le xvi^e siècle tout entier n'a pas produit un seul grand homme en philosophie, un vrai penseur, un philosophe original.'—Cousin, *Fragments Philosophiques*, p. 82.

² Sir James Mackintosh's *Works*, p. 50.

of St. Thomas Aquinas and Peter the Lombard in the elegant Latin of the age of Leo X. The Italian Picus of Mirandola¹ took in hand nothing less than the reconciliation of Plato and Aristotle, and maintained the thesis 'de omni re scibili,' a thoroughly Scholastic title. Zabarella of Padua was the possessor of all the great philosophers of the thirteenth century, and was engaged in the somewhat difficult task of reconciling them with Aristotle. At this period the Arab commentators of Aristotle begin to resume their place in the School.

Achillini of Bologna and Zabarella did little else than reproduce the opinions of Averroes. Cardan of Pavia was the most illustrious of the new Averroists. Instances of this bastard species of Scholasticism might be indefinitely multiplied; enough has been said to show that the Sixteenth Century was the point of contact between Scholasticism and the new learning—the link between mediæval and modern thought.

At Paris more especially is the contest between new and old clearly developed. There the greater part of the Sixteenth Century was consumed in a quarrel between the detractors of Aristotle, headed by Ramus, and the defenders of that ancient idol of the Schools, led on by Jacques Charpentier. So fierce waxed the battle that, on the disappearance of Pierre Ramus on the night of the St. Bartholomew, it was more than suspected that his rival had taken an unphilosophical method of concluding the debate. The reactionary result of the long reign of Scholasticism in Paris and its prolonged death-agonies has been described as that philosophy 'qui ne nie et n'affirme rien, qui doute de tout et rit de tout.'

Scholasticism in France.

One other channel remains to be mentioned through

¹ These, with many other instances, are to be found in *Sciences et Lettres au Moyen-âge et à l'époque de la Renaissance*, par Paul Lacroix, p. 46, 'Sciences philosophiques.'

The
Jesuits.

which mediæval thought must have come in contact with the popular mind. The Jesuits, established in 1534, while instructing the Catholic youth of Europe, doubtless much assisted in spreading the ideas of St. Thomas Aquinas, whose opinions they had accepted as their great rule of conduct. Their writings on laws and morals have certainly contributed much to form a science of political right.¹ It is but fair, since the Jesuits have gained an unfortunate celebrity from the peculiar character of their casuistical works, that these results of their more happily directed labours should not be forgotten.

Divisions of
literature.

Such being the actual historical links between the Schoolmen and moderns, it now remains to trace the continuation of their influence on the separate branches of literature.

I. Form.
II. Matter.

For greater convenience in handling the subject it is proposed to divide literature into two principal parts, form and matter. By matter we understand the thoughts underlying all form. Under form we comprise style and method—the accidents of which thought is the substance—the waves which show the working of the tide of ideas.

Form.

Of the two divisions of form, style as distinguished from method is the one on which Scholasticism has had least influence. ‘Sweetness and light,’ all that charms in the manner of telling, and sheds a halo over even common-place thoughts, is almost entirely wanting in the Schoolmen.² This is why the moderns find it so easy to forget one great influence of these writers.

Indirect in-
fluence of
Schoolmen
on style.

The effects of any external force depend largely, as the Schoolmen would have said, ‘modo recipientis.’ Had the human mind not undergone its long gymnastic training in the logical disputes of the Middle Ages—had not a

¹ Sir James Mackintosh's *Works*, p. 52.

² ‘L'historien des lettres doit l'avouer; tous ces efforts pour substituer des procédés artificiels au mouvement naturel de la pensée, ont bien peu

knowledge of Latin and even Greek¹ been preserved—mankind might have had neither the ears to hear nor the hearts to understand classical literature, so happily restored during the Renaissance.

Method, it has been said, was the true originality of the Schoolmen. Method, and a precision in the use of terms not to be found in the ancients, are our heritages from them. The long quarrel between the Nominalists and Realists did much to fix the meaning of words. Barbarous as was their jargon, its chief object was to arrive at accuracy.² Turn over the leaves of any modern book, particularly of one which deals with philosophical subjects; on nearly every page will be found words of Latin origin, either stereotyping one of a number of meanings, or varying very considerably from their classical signification—as ‘species,’ ‘substantial,’ ‘formal,’ ‘transcendental,’ ‘ratio.’³

Precision
in the use
of words.

It is this variation which often renders translation

servi au progrès de la composition.’—*Histoire Littéraire de la France*, Victor le Clerc et Ernest Renan.

¹ Scotus Erigena certainly knew some Greek.—(Berington, *Literary History of Middle Ages*, p. 151.) St. Thomas, as M. Jourdain informs us (in the passage quoted *supra*, p. 6, note), caused numerous translations of portions of Aristotle to be made, from which it is evident that there must have been among the learned some who understood this language.

² Abelard, in a copy of verses addressed to his son Astrolabius, insists very strongly on the importance of clearness of expression. The verses are to be found in the library of the British Museum:

‘Fructu non foliis pomorum quisque cibatur,
Et sensus verbis antefendus erit.
Ornatis animos captet persuasio verbis,
Doctrinæ magis est debita planities.
Copia verborum est ubi non est copia sensus,
Constat et errantem multiplicare vias.’

³ ‘Locke had sneered at the Schoolmen unfairly. We had ridiculed their *quiddities*, and why? Had we not borrowed their *quantity* and their *quality*, and why then reject their *quiddity*, when every schoolboy in logic must know that of everything may be asked *quantum est? quale est? and quid est?* the last bringing you to the most material of all points, its Individual Being.’—Coleridge, *Table Talk*, p. 338.

from the classics so difficult and insidious, as every school-boy knows. Such useful shorthand methods for the expression of reasoning processes as 'a priori,' 'a posteriori,' date back for the most part to the same source. It is no small boon to possess, in comparative peace, expressions and words which once formed the centre on which great dialectical struggles turned.

Literary
arrange-
ment.

French literature (according to one of its most illustrious writers¹) owes much of its lucidity of exposition and general 'netteté' to the deep root which Scholasticism took at Paris. The results, it must be owned, are not without a disagreeable alloy.² A mania for division and subdivision, a series of over-subtle distinctions and innumerable headings in French pulpit oratory (which in due time is printed and becomes literature), have been traced back to Scholasticism.³

The same is doubtless true of our own sermons; for the most energetic of the Reformers, while casting off much of the ritual and doctrines of Rome, still delighted in long and complicated discourses, *more majorum*. It might even plausibly be conjectured that some Anglican divines of the present generation had studied two remarkable treatises, still extant in the library of Balliol College, Oxford, of which one is entitled 'Ars dividendi Themata'—the other, with horrible *naïveté*, 'Ars dilatandi Sermones.'⁴

¹ Ernest Renan.

² In Germany the same thing has been noticed. 'They' (German theological writers) 'continue most of them to write in the same barbarous manner . . . a cumbrous nomenclature bristling with formulæ and encyclopædic subdivisions.' 'It is not uncommon to exhaust successive alphabets—Latin and Greek—on the enumeration of subdivisions, and to be obliged to have recourse to Hebrew letters.'—'The Tübingen Württemberg Theological Education,' *Macmillan's Magazine*, Sept. 1864.

³ *Histoire Littéraire de la France*, by Victor le Clerc and Ernest Renan, vol. i. p. 418.

⁴ Balliol College (MS. 179).

It is strange that the Scotch Presbyterian Church, little wont to tolerate the practices of Rome, has been one of the chief offenders in this respect. When the Geneva minister of the olden school approaches—not too soon—the final heading, it may be suspected that he seldom reflects how markedly he is reproducing peculiarities inherited from far-off ancestors in the scholastic period.

In spite of this ill result, there has survived a more than counterbalancing good. Prefixed to the chapter of Mr. Mill's 'Logic,' entitled 'The Necessity of Commencing with an Analysis of Language,' are two very suggestive quotations:—

Language
as a pro-
logue to
logic.

'La scholastique, qui produisit dans la logique comme dans la morale, et dans une partie de la métaphysique, une subtilité, une précision d'idées, dont l'habitude, inconnue aux anciens, a contribué plus qu'on ne croit au progrès de la bonne philosophie.'¹

Immediately below is placed another sentence from Sir William Hamilton's 'Discussions in Philosophy':—

'To the Schoolmen the vulgar languages are principally indebted for what precision and analytic subtlety they possess.'

A whole eulogy and complete recognition of scholastic services to language and logic is summed up in these two pregnant sentences, placed in juxtaposition, and accepted as the inspiration to the opening chapter of so influential a work as Mill's 'Logic.' That which Condorcet, Sir William Hamilton, and Mill have asserted, requires no further confirmation.

Precision of language and literary arrangement are the natural prologues to logic itself. Deductive logic was the special work of the Schoolmen. They brought the syllogism to a degree of perfection which has never since

Logic.

¹ Condorcet, *Vie de Turgot*.

Evil effect
of logic in
theology.

been surpassed. They loved it as a certain means of discovering truth. To it heaven and hell were to give up their secrets; even the eternal mystery of the being and essence of God was to become as clear as daylight. In course of time, however, so many contradictory opinions were proved by so many perfect syllogisms that distrust of the whole method was aroused, and Scholasticism as the universal garment of learning fell away for ever. Still the Roman Catholic Church preserved the purely scholastico-logical style in her theological and controversial works, and still preserves it. In the Gallican Church, some of her ablest sons have pointed out with fearless candour, in spite of the frowns of authority, the evil of this antiquated system.¹ One writer bitterly complains that a few jokes on the abuses of Scholasticism had been treated as scandalous and even blasphemous.² The same author remarks that the retention of this method, abandoned by all the other sciences, has done much to isolate theology amidst the present generation, which it is its duty to direct.

Similar consequences are also to be traced in the writings of divines belonging to the reformed branches of the Church; for theology is, above all things, a creature of tradition. A remarkable instance of the employment of a rigid scholastico-logical method is afforded by 'The Enquiry into the modern prevailing Notions respecting the Freedom of Will,' by Jonathan Edwards, a book which long maintained a great reputation with certain sections of the religious world. There³ may be found an incongruous mixture of abstract reasoning with scriptural proofs; a confusion of what is purely abstract with facts which are in reality physical; a

¹ *Philosophie du Christianisme*, par l'Abbé Baintain.

² *Ibid.* p. 45.

³ Taylor's *Logic in Theology*.

formally unbroken chain of cast-iron reasoning, which leaves us at last with a vague sense of discontent, with a suspicion that what we have been reading may possibly be logic but is certainly not fact. There is only one word of sufficient extension to cover all these perversions of things in themselves necessary and useful; and that word is Scholasticism—Scholasticism in its most unabated and mischievous form.

Having permitted ourselves thus far to speak ill of the employment of logic, as bequeathed to us through the great masters of the Middle Ages, it is with renewed pleasure that we turn to a brighter side and happier results. As of old logic was necessary to train the world's mind, so still in individual cases it is wisely looked upon, in this place more especially, as indispensable to a thorough education.¹ It is not altogether without significance that the greatest statesmen of France have been ecclesiastics trained up in the theological subtleties of mediæval Europe, and that in England so many remarkable politicians have been distinguished in the Oxford schools, where logic has held its place. The original impulse which inspired Whately and Sir William Hamilton, Mansel and Bain, Herbert Spencer and Mill—whose works have so deeply influenced modern literature—came from this University. In Oxford, where the logical revival commenced and was carried on in its earlier stages, the academic spirit slumbered and slept during the greater part of the eighteenth century. The examinations were either neglected altogether,² or were like post-mortem discussions held with solemn dulness over the decayed body and dry

Good results of logic.

The Oxford School.

¹ The well-known mnemonic lines, beginning 'Barbara celarent,' are due to Scholastic ingenuity. It must be supposed that the numerous metrical versions of Aristotle were composed for the same humane purpose, as they could hardly, even then, have been considered poetical.

² *Essays* by Vicesimus Knox.

Bishop Copleston.

bones of Scholastic logic.¹ But there was life yet remaining under all this decay—not such alien forms of it as make a mockery of true duration, but a real though metamorphosed survival of the old existence. Bishop Copleston, before the passing of what may be emphatically called *the Examination Statute* (1800), found himself suddenly called upon to lecture on logic. Face to face with a subject of which he had no knowledge, and having no living help to apply to, he collected and read all the books he could find which professed to treat of it. With toil—how difficult and tedious those may imagine who have ever tried to read through a Scholastic work—he gradually made out a system, clearing away all extraneous matter and ambiguous expressions. ‘In every undertaking of this kind,’ says Archbishop Whately (from whose book these facts are collected), ‘as far as concerns logic I had part of the work ready done for me by Bishop Copleston.’ This was the real commencement of that logical movement which shed such lustre on Oxford, from whence it has passed to the outside world. The particles of gold belonging to Scholastic philosophy, so carefully separated from the rubbish, have produced interest and compound interest. It may therefore be fairly said of subsequent writers, without any detriment to their well-deserved reputation, that through Copleston to the Schoolmen they owe just that small amount of literary capital without which their great fortunes would have been impossible.

Revival of logic.

Matter.

In entering upon the substance of literature, so vast a field lies open that it is impossible to explore it thoroughly. Such examples will therefore be selected as may best

¹ The farce of ‘doing Austens and Quodlibets,’ the feeble caricature of Scholastic disputations, was exhibited in the Oxford Schools on every Degree-day not eighty years ago!

illustrate the subject in hand—always keeping in mind the fact that it is no part of the present essay to deal with the truth of ideas, but merely to point out the influence of a certain class of writers on literature, taken in its most general sense. Among the various modern writers on psychology, Hume's *Essay on Association* is not the least able or original. Nothing could seem more unlikely than that this eminent sceptic should have deigned to derive his inspirations from a Roman Catholic theologian. That such is the case, however, the following quotation from Coleridge's '*Biographia Literaria*' seems to prove. It is here inserted as bearing most directly on the subject, and throwing much light on the unexpected manner in which ideas are often conveyed. 'In consulting the excellent commentary of St. Thomas Aquinas on the "*Parva Naturalia*" of Aristotle,' says Coleridge, 'I was struck at once with its close resemblance to Hume's *Essay on Association*. The main thoughts were the same in both; the order of the thoughts was the same; and even the illustrations differed only by Hume's occasional substitution of more modern examples. I mentioned the circumstance to several of my literary acquaintances, who admitted the closeness of the resemblance, and that it seemed too great to be explained by mere coincidence; but they thought it improbable that Hume should have held the pages of the Angelic Doctor worth turning over. But, some time after, Mr. Payne of the King's Mews showed Sir James Mackintosh some odd volumes of St. Thomas Aquinas, partly, perhaps, having heard that Sir James (then Mr.) Mackintosh had in his lectures passed a high encomium on the canonised philosopher, but chiefly from the fact that the volumes had belonged to Mr. Hume, and had here and there marginal marks and notes of reference in

Psychology.

his own handwriting. Among these volumes was that which contained the "Parva Naturalia" in the old Latin version, swathed and swaddled in the commentary aforementioned.'

Surely it is a strange irony of fate that the thoughts of St. Thomas should have gone to swell the reputation of Mr. Hume, and stranger still that the connection of the two should have been so clearly demonstrated. The commentary on the 'Parva Naturalia' is not a part of the works of St. Thomas often read, and Mr. Hume has not acknowledged his obligations.¹

Ethics.

Disinterestedness
of the religious
affections.

Among those ideas which belong more especially to the sphere of ethics, many germs of more modern topics of discussion may be found in the same great writer and typical Schoolman. It is remarkable that St. Thomas has anticipated those controversies respecting perfect disinterestedness in the religious affections which are commonly supposed to have arisen many hundred years after his death. Bossuet and Fénelon (both doubtless well acquainted with the Angel of the Schools) were not the first, as they are not the last, who have occupied themselves with this problem—'Utrum Deus sit super omnia diligendus ex caritate, utrum in dilectione Dei possit haberi respectus ad aliquam mercedem?'² The question could not be put more clearly than by St. Thomas in this passage. In his answer he distinguishes

¹ It is remarkable that Algazel, an Arabic Schoolman, in his *Destruction of Philosophers*, endeavours, like David Hume, to resolve causality into the habitual relation between two facts, of which one follows the other more often, without a necessary relation existing between them. Could Mr. Hume, by any strange chance, have become acquainted with this obscure work? Mr. Coleridge, in his *Table Talk*, is said to have asserted that 'he had proved to the satisfaction of Mackintosh that there was nothing in Locke which his best admirers most admired that might not be found more clearly and better laid down in Descartes or the old Schoolmen.' (P. 338.)

² St. Thomas Aquinas, *Opera*, ix. pp. 322, 325. Among the ancient divines 'caritas' corresponds most nearly with the theological virtue of charity, comprehending the love of all that is love-worthy in the Creator or his creatures.

two kinds of love. The first is 'amor concupiscentiæ,' as love of wine for desire of its sweetness. But there is another and more powerful kind of love: 'Alio modo amor fortior in bonum alicujus rei, ita quod ad rem ipsam terminatur; et hic est amor benevolentiae.' Therefore is our happiness in God perfect as partaking of both. It is curious to remark that these distinctions have sunk from the higher sphere of religion into the lower of human affection. There are few novels (the favourite method in the present era of discussing psychological and ethical problems) in which a similar distinction with regard to personal love will not be strongly brought out by one or more of the principal personages. Nothing is more interesting to follow than the fortunes of an idea. This one has had a striking career. First (as far as we can tell) clearly put by St. Thomas, subsequently taken up by Bossuet and Fénelon, it has finally, with a changed application, taken a place in the ephemeral literature of the period, less, it may be feared, to 'point a moral' than to 'adorn a tale.'

Personal
love.

St. Thomas, having satisfactorily proved that we are to love God 'caritate,' decides that we have a reward, though he very clearly distinguishes piety from its happy fruits. 'Nihil aliud est merces nostra quam perfrui Deo. Ergo caritas non solum non excludit sed etiam facit habere oculus ad mercedem.' These opinions are the very same as those of Jeremy Taylor's sermon on the Growth in Grace, Lord Shaftesbury's 'Inquiry concerning Virtue,' and Mr. T. Erskine's 'Freeness of the Gospel.'

Sir James Mackintosh² cites another doctrine in St.

¹ Edinburgh, 1828.

² The sentence on which Sir James Mackintosh wishes to place this interpretation is here given:—'Potest habere charitatem habere oculus ad mercedem, uti ponat beatitudinem creatam finem amoris, non autem finem amati.'—*Dissertations on the Progress of Ethical Philosophy*, p. 282.

Thomas Aquinas, which asserts that, though our own happiness be not the end which we pursue, yet it may be the final cause of the existence of disinterested affections in the nature of man. If this really be the case (and very plausible grounds are given for supposing that it may be), we have a fresh instance of a very probable transmission of ideas through some of those subterranean passages of thought which it is so difficult accurately to ascertain. Many other similarities exist between St. Thomas and modern ethical writers, partly, no doubt, attributable to a sameness of subject. As, however, the observations contained in what had long been the text-book of the European Schools have been continued by an unbroken succession of writers, it is not to be supposed that the human mind arrived independently at conclusions which may be accounted for in a manner so much more natural. In the words of the great Nominalist saying (known as Ockham's razor), 'Entia non præter necessitatem multiplicanda sunt.'

Political
ideas.

With regard to political notions, it would appear at first sight that scholastic thought had retired from the great democratical positions of antiquity. This is true in one sense ; but it retired only as when the tide is rising the water may be seen to withdraw beyond its latest level, to gather fresh impulse which shall bear it to a point far higher than any mark yet attained. The great work of the Schoolmen had been to reconcile heathen philosophy and Christianity.¹ One of their chief efforts in political

General
tendency of
the School-
men.

¹ That St. Thomas set this object before him is plain. *De Reg. Arg.* : 'In quo (libro) et regni originem et ea quæ ad regis officium pertinent secundum Scripturæ Divinæ auctoritatem, philosophorum dogma, et exempla laudatorum principum, diligenter depromerem.' This short definition embraces, with some slight allowances, the necessary qualities of the most finished political work. It may be objected that too prominent a place is given to Holy Scripture. It is, however, this element which distinguishes a modern

literature was to harmonise the brilliant but cold Pagan ideal with that 'nescio quâ dulcedine,' the very attribute of Christianity. St. Augustine, in his time, shows us the outlines of two marvellous cities. His successors began to take in hand the scientific fusion of the codes belonging to these two States. Many advantages which modern writers enjoy over the ancients are due to the further organisation and development of the process begun in mediæval Europe. The truth of this remark will become more evident as the particular instances are detailed.

The duty of public charity, which is in some sort recognised as binding by every modern State, was first systematically introduced into a regular treatise on politics by a Schoolman.¹ St. Thomas (or some unknown individual), in a series of interesting chapters in the 'De Regimine Principum,' on the conditions and duties of royal power, establishes the relief of the poor and assistance of the feeble as one of them. This is a new side of the political question. The Christian had always inculcated charity, but it was as a Christian duty, not as a public one. The Greek, in his glorious sunshine, built up a State where every one was to be beautiful and every one to be brave. The Christian opinion was sufficient to meet all wants, provided there were a sufficient number of men actuated by such noble motives. The Grecian was sufficient as long as there was no misery, as long as no one was sick or sorry. But each, taken separately, was insufficient for this work-day world. St. Thomas's is the commencement

Public charity.

polity from an ancient. The philanthropical element of Christianity, thus introduced, is now recognised even by those States who do not publicly acknowledge any form of religion.

¹ It is not for a moment denied that similar principles were taught by philosophers long before the Christian era; but we are here dealing with European literature during its formation among our more immediate ancestors in the Middle Ages.

of a true practical solution ; and it is thus that the influence of Scholastic Christianity will remain—for who shall again pronounce a divorce between the State and her poor ?

Sovereignty in the hands of the people.

In close connection with the great democratical principle that sovereignty ultimately comes from, and is designed for, the people, (whether we derive it from the republics of Greece or Rome, or from the shouting Teuton in the assembly of his tribe,) are several subordinate propositions. One of these, necessarily implied in the general theory given above, is the right of resistance to tyranny. From the earliest times it was looked upon as a noble deed to free the fatherland from its oppressor. The Tarquins were driven from Rome. The Greek poet was giving expression to a national sentiment when he bade

To wreath the sword in myrtle boughs—
The sword that laid Hipparchus low.

Important modifications introduced by the Schoolmen.

None of the ancients, however, declared explicitly under what conditions revolution was legitimate, or the principles of the right by which a people, in certain cases, might employ force to gain its freedom or assure its happiness. It was reserved for the Scholastic, in this as in so many other cases, to give the first shade of modern expression to speculation. The Church began to find herself in antagonism with the Temporal Power. She immediately taught through her theologians that it was lawful in certain cases—of which she herself was to be judge—for a people to resist their rulers. Here we have the right of resistance which had been allowed by the ancients, no longer sudden, arbitrary, tumultuous, bloody, but dependent upon certain conditions. This is surely a great step. We find these conditions laid down in St. Thomas Aquinas ;¹ but he, as was to be expected, seems

¹ *De Reg.* i. c. 6 : 'Si ad jus multitudinis alicujus pertineat sibi providere de rege, non injuste ab eadem rex institutus potest destrui. . . .'

to leave the final decision in the hands of the Church.¹ Marsilius of Padua, a scholastic jurist, goes further; for he expresses the same opinions without reference to the paramount authority of the Pope.

Along with this almost constitutional theory, the old question of tyrannicide continued to survive. John of Salisbury² (in spite of his sneers, essentially a Schoolman), and an unbroken succession of writers down to the time of Mariana,³ treat on the same subject, among whom are St. Thomas Aquinas, Jean Petit, and Gerson. Thus, through that great crucible the Middle Ages, we find unregulated resistance expressed by tyrannicide, and the unconditional submission of the early Christians, taking together a more modified form, through the teaching of the Schoolmen. It is this temperate type which has served as a model to modern writers, and which they owe to mediæval Christendom.

Tyrannicide.

Fusion of the two extreme opinions.

The reseparation of political theory from theology and morality in general, though not before it had caught

Separation of the right of the people from morality in general.

Nec putanda est talis multitudo infideliter agere tyrannum destituens, etiamsi eidem in perpetuo se ante subjecerat; quia hoc ipse meruit, in multitudinis regimine se non fideliter gerens, ut exigit regis officium, quod ei pactum a subditis non reservetur. Sic Romani Tarquinium Superbum . . . a regno ejecerunt.' It is deposition which is evidently pointed at here, and the passage in which St. Thomas is supposed to have advocated tyrannicide is of extremely doubtful meaning.

¹ 'Potestas spiritualis et secularis utraque deducitur a potestate divina; ideo in tantum secularis est sub spirituali, in quantum est a Deo supposita; scilicet, in his quæ ad salutem animæ pertinent. In his autem quæ ad bonum civile spectant, est magis obediendum potestati seculari; sicut illud Matthæi "Reddite quæ sunt Cæsaris Cæsari." . . . Nisi forte potestati spirituali etiam potestas secularis conjungatur, ut in Papa, qui utriusque potestatis apicem tenet.'—St. Thomas, *Opp.* vol. viii. p. 435. It may be doubted here whether Aquinas means the Pope's temporal power in his own dominions, or a secular authority indirectly extending over all for the sake of religion.

² Polycraticus, iii. 5: 'Tyrannum occidere non modo licitum est sed æquum et justum.'

³ *De Reg.* of Mariana (1603).

some of its tone, originated also among the Schoolmen. What has been said more particularly of the Reformation era is also true of the preceding period. 'We talk loftily of the confusion of things secular and sacred in the life of those struggling generations. We can keep the two spheres fairly disentangled, simply because what we call secular was thoroughly leavened in the kneading-trough of those centuries with the ideas and influences of spiritual truths.' Luther,¹ whether consciously or unconsciously, struck on a distinction which is pretty generally accepted by the moderns. 'Cease,' says the fiery Reformer in his letter to the peasants, 'to speak of Christian right—say rather it is natural right, the right of men, that you are vindicating.' The groundwork of this proposition is to be found in St. Thomas Aquinas, who, while referring all back to God, drew some very clear distinctions. From the idea of law he passes to the idea of right, of which there are two kinds, natural and positive. A further division is made into the rights of mankind and civil rights. It is not, however, until towards the middle of the Seventeenth Century that natural right and the rights of the people begin to take a place separate from morality in general.² Grotius has the credit of first perceiving this in his 'Right of Peace and War.' Puffendorf separates theological and natural right, excluding the question of immortality, so that he has been accused of shutting up natural right '*tantum ambitu hujus vitæ*.'³ Remembering the distinctions of St. Thomas, it is by no means surprising to find that the work of the one writer is founded on the 'De Legibus' of Suarez—itself founded on a more

Suarez and
Grotius.

¹ *Mémoires de Luther*, par M. Michelet.

² These facts are mainly taken from Janet's *Histoire de la Philosophie morale et politique*.

³ Leibnitz.

famous 'De Legibus'—and that the other has borrowed all his matter from the various sums of theology and Grotius. Machiavelli,¹ indeed, separated politics from morality. In his case, however, we merely see morality put aside practically, from a wish to take things as they are, not as they ought to be. In the case of the other writers mentioned, we have the evolution of a theory first given by St. Thomas. The distinctions which in them became separate were propagated in a manner which nearly resembles that process which in the physical world is termed 'fission.'

To the Reformation is attributed civil liberty as the result of religious. This idea of liberty has a different aspect from the ancient conception. It embraces in it a much larger amount of the private judgment of each individual which had already been vindicated in religious matters. To the Reformation belongs the glory of the long and arduous struggle, which had so happy a result. The Nominalist Ockham,² however, has the credit of first formulating the fact that Christianity was a law of liberty; that Christ, in ~~delivering~~ us from the servitude of the Law, delivered us from all servitude like to it.

Civil
liberty the
result of
religious.

Luther was not slow to make his own adaptation of this new inspiration. For, obviously as it seems to lie on the face of Christianity, new it was. Christ's kingdom was not of this world. The slave and his master were indeed equal in the eyes of God. Nowhere are we taught that the Christian is free from temporal bondage. Passive obedience was inculcated in all matters, saving only

¹ The *Prince* was written with the immediate object of obtaining employment from the Medici, whatever may have been its secondary purpose. —*Letters to Vettori*, xxvi., 10 Dec. 1513.

² *Octo Questiones super Potestate*. He comes back upon the same arguments in the *Dialogus*. Ockham does not, however, follow out his argument to its legitimate conclusion. He contradicts himself by saying that Christians could not be slaves, but could possess them.

religion. 'Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, but unto God the things that are God's.' When the Church became triumphant, it is not surprising to find that a doctrine which had not been taught in the days of her adversity was a long time in being recognised amid the deceitfulness of riches. William Ockham was, therefore, insisting on a great principle, and one which had as yet never been explicitly laid down in any considerable book—one, too, which certain modern writers are overfond of attributing too exclusively to the martyrs of the Sixteenth Century, forgetting that the Reformation had its roots in the past. Without falling into the vulgar error—and it has become vulgar—of an unjust depreciation of these worthies, it is only fair to pay our meed of praise to their half-forgotten predecessors. Honour to whom honour is due.

International law.

Many other germs, less distinctively marked with the Christian element, having an ever-broadening future before them, are to be found amid the intricacies of these over-subtle books. Suarez, the last great Schoolman, recognised that element in international law which has since been distinguished as the *consuetudinary*.¹ States, he declares, are never so self-sufficient as to be independent of mutual aid and intercourse. 'Hac igitur ratione indigent aliquo jure, quo dirigantur et recte ordinentur in hoc genere societatis . . . ideoque specialia jura poterant usu earundem gentium introduci.'

The Nineteenth Century has made some real advance along the path thus indicated; yet, after many sore disappointments and much effusion of blood, there is still some reason to wish, as did Suarez, for 'specialia jura.' A growing impulse is, however, visible, which may some day supersede the might of the strongest. In the mean-

¹ Suarez, *De Legg.* lib. ii. cap. 2.

time, it is worthy of note that the first King of united Italy has delighted to honour the Englishman who rescued from oblivion and clearly set forth the merits of an obscure Schoolman in this department of learning. It is not without reason, therefore, that we assert international law to have had its principal source in pages which may with good reason be considered as Scholastic.¹

If we trace back modern political writings to their origin in Europe, we shall arrive, not at the Sixteenth Century, nor even directly at ancient Rome and Greece, but at mediæval philosophy, in which the same elements meet in a combination similar to that which is the characteristic of modern literature. In doing so, we must endeavour as far as possible to eliminate the revolutionary movements with which they are so intimately connected, and consider them merely as literature. The first thinkers who commenced to build up the theory of a modern polity on broad general principles were the Schoolmen. St. Thomas Aquinas takes as the basis of his arguments that the sovereignty is in the hands of the people.² The fabric which he rears, however, differs as widely in its architecture from the republic of classic times as does a Greek temple from a Gothic church. The 'Angelic Doctor,' starting from this common ground, develops both a representation of the people and a constitutional monarchy. The combination of these in a scientific work surely marks a new era in political literature. It is this scientific treatment which becomes developed in the sixteenth

Origin of
modern
political
writings.

Various
elements
scientifically
treated by
the School-
men.

¹ Alberico Gentili belonged to the transition period.

² He also tells us that all men are equal by nature—(2^d 2^a, q. civ., art. 5; also *Comm. in Job*, c. iii. lect. 2). This is a step in advance of Aristotle, who, to excuse slavery, asserted that men were not by nature equal. It is true that St. Thomas did not condemn slavery, but he pointed out the necessity of a reformation in the conduct of masters towards their slaves.

century by both Protestant and Catholic writers.¹ Ideas are built upon ideas; from France the movement passes on to England—the England of Milton and Locke, as well as of Hobbes and of Filmer. From England it returns to France once again, finally to culminate in the Revolution.

The social contract.

Let us take one fair example, which may help to show how the method of building up propositions practised by the Schoolmen led to various conclusions. It is well known what an important part the theory of the 'social contract' has assumed in history. In St. Thomas we find both the democratic principles² on which it was founded and a very similar use of contracts. Once given these two factors, the question naturally follows to a juridical and scholastic mind—'Can the people alienate their right or not?' Suarez (though not the originator of this development) marks how naturally the question follows, by proposing it and giving an affirmative answer. He was a Schoolman, and his works are mainly founded on St. Thomas. It is a fact not always remembered that this doctrine (which took such different complexions in the 'Leviathan' of Hobbes, and afterwards in the 'Social Contract' of J.-J. Rousseau) was one of the principal arguments used to justify the Parliament of England in offering the crown to William of Orange.³ From the right thus exercised many benefits have resulted, among others a free press.

While thus referring back modern political writing, in

¹ It is not on the various elements which were known to ancient writers that stress is to be laid, but on the combination and animus of treatment—the new life among the old members, which is so evidently there and so difficult to define.

² Suarez, who has been called the last of the Schoolmen, in his *De Legibus* gives a complete succession of authors, from St. Thomas to himself, who held these opinions. T. Aquinas (9, 90, art. iii., ad 2; 9, 97, art. iii., ad 3); Castro (lib. i. 'De Leg. poenali,' c. 1); Soto (lib. i. 'De Justit. et Jure,' 9, 1, art. 3, et lib. iv., 9, 2, art. 1 and 2); and others.

³ Hallam's *Const. Hist.* vol. iii. chap. xiv.

general, to the Schoolmen as its true ancestors, it is not for a moment to be supposed that the effect of other influences is denied. They certainly employed the method of Aristotle, many of Plato's ideas, and also, doubtless, Teutonic notions current in Europe. No mason, however, is obliged to bake his own bricks; and it is boldly asserted that the Schoolmen welded together a variety of material to be found in no other fabric of ancient construction; that they were their own architects; and that theirs was the archetypal house of modern political building.

Due weight
to be given
to other in-
fluences

It is impossible to pass from this portion of our subject without noticing certain presages of future tolerance, and far-reaching definitions deliberately issued by writers, in whom the present generation would expect to find nothing but bigotry and intolerance. It is, indeed, beyond our power to trace the influence of these sayings directly on our own age, but it may fairly be presumed that they have had some effect on modern thought. How superior, for instance, is St. Thomas's definition of law—'quædam rationis ordinatio ad bonum commune, ab eo qui curam communitatis habet promulgata'—to that of Rousseau: 'La loi ne serait que l'expression de la volonté générale, qui réglerait de son autorité propre tous les devoirs de la vie civile!' Reasonable or unreasonable, for good or evil, the brute will of the multitude—'that numerous piece of monstrosity, which, taken asunder, seem men and the reasonable creatures of God, but confused together make one great beast'¹—was constituted the sole authority by the French writer and the French Revolution. Marsilius of Padua² (of whom mention has

Miscella-
neous facts.

¹ Sir Thomas Browne.

² The same writer held very liberal opinions in politics. 'Legislatorem humanum, solam civium universitatem esse, aut valentiorum illius partem.'—Goldast. *De Monarch. Defensor. Pacis*, conclusio vi. ann 1314. *Ib.* concl. x. and part i. c. xii.

already been made) did not hesitate to declare, with a candour and liberality which did him great honour, 'ad observanda præcepta divina legis, poenâ vel supplicio temporali seu præsentis seculi, nemo Evangelicâ Scripturâ compelli præcipitur.' This is one of the few indications of tolerance to be found in scholastic writings, and shows to what goal the human mind once set on the path of enquiry was tending.

Sir James Mackintosh sees in Dante's 'Monarchia' a philosophy of history; and it certainly must have done much to keep up the idea of *universality*, one of the numerous ingredients in the somewhat ambiguous compound designated by that name.

Dominic Soto and his master Victoria deserve to be remembered for the noble part which they took against the rapacity and cruelty of the Spaniards towards natives of America and Africa. Not inappropriately is the result of Christianity laid down on broad logical principles illustrated by these words of Soto, with which it is well to conclude this portion of our subject, as they are among the last utterances of the Schools—'Neque discrepantia (ut reor) est inter Christianos et infideles, quoniam jus gentium cunctis gentibus æquale est.'

Ontology.

The results of a too logical method and mechanical divisions in the form of theology have already been dwelt upon. The more abstract part now remains to be dealt with. The human mind once raised above τὰ φυσικά is sure to find itself face to face, in that transcendental world, with the question of questions concerning the existence and attributes of God. This problem was one which the Schoolmen above all things loved to discuss. With them, ontology was always taken in connection with God. Before proceeding to theological and philosophical ideas in general, it is best to see what part of the

speculations of the Schoolmen on this subject have continued to exercise an influence. Among the many frivolous questions so warmly debated by mediæval dialecticians, there are some of deeper meaning—so mysterious that we can assign to them no date of origin, nor any probable termination while man inhabits the earth. The Schoolmen have certainly contributed much to imbue the European mind with Pantheism—that Impersonal Infinite, alternately expanding into the monstrous God, who is All, or contracting into the shadowy God, who is Nothing. Pantheism has resulted from Scholastic writings in two ways—firstly, as communicated from Arabic sources; secondly, as a conclusion from premises. What a hold it had taken upon thought in the time of Albertus Magnus is evident, since he finished off his work by an elaborate refutation of Oriental Pantheism, and declares disdainfully, ‘Hoc videtur omnino mihi deliramento simile.’¹ Pantheism.

With regard to the second point, Pantheism may be traced as early as the time of Scotus Erigena. In his ‘De Divisione Naturæ’ he separates all things into four classes :

- I. That which creates and is not created.
- II. That which is created and creates.
- III. That which is created but does not create.
- IV. That which is neither creating nor created.

His fourth book considers the return of all things into that nature which is neither creating nor created. Pantheism appears to be the natural conclusion of the reabsorption of all things into the bosom of God, which, however, he repudiates by one of those subtle distinctions for which the Schoolmen were never at a loss. It would almost seem as if the fury of unintelligent spirits, against

¹ *Opp.* iii. p. 139. Also *Opp.* v. p. 201: ‘Est autem hic error omnino absurdus, et pessimus, et valde improbabilis.’

whom the author of the 'Theophania' so loudly declaims, had some hand in this denial of necessary consequences. Abelard, at least, later on, saw very clearly that 'Pantheism was the outcome of both Realism and Nominalism.'¹ The truth of this is proved by these words, extracted from a Scholastic writer still taught in the Church seminaries.² After defining space he concludes: 'Sic probabile est illud spatium infinitum nihil aliud esse quam immensitatem naturæ divinæ; nam *ab eâ distingui non potest.*' It is therefore evident that Scholasticism was one of the chief routes by which Pantheism has advanced even out of the bosom of Orthodoxy.

Theology.

Leaving these more abstract speculations, and looking more directly within the pale of Christianity, two distinct trains of ideas are to be found which are continually rising to the surface. There are those who still cling to the old logic, and believe that the adversaries of the Church are yet to be overthrown by the syllogism. Specimens of this class abound mostly in the Roman Catholic Church, but are becoming exceedingly rare. On the other hand, there is a reactionary party, who, utterly disgusted with reason in religion, would derive nearly all the ills of the Church from the introduction of a sort of clandestine rationalism by the Schoolmen. These writers point to the methodic doubt of Descartes, as the natural link between Scholasticism and pure Rationalism. 'The hearts of men,' say they, 'began by trying to do without faith; they ended by having none.'³ They probably owe their existence to the strong revulsion of the Reformation period from the theological subtleties by which the world was then oppressed. These two views are selected as bringing into

¹ Cousin.

² Philippus Lugdunensis.

³ This is the literal translation of the words used by M. Bautain in his *Philosophie du Christianisme*.

strong relief the direct and reactionary influence of a great system. It is, of course, very evident that there are many other shades of opinion which are full of good sense, and which respond to the electrical thrill of the past by less violent vibrations.

The Church has, on the whole, neither reason to bless them nor curse¹ them altogether. If the doctrines of Ockham, Roscelin, Abelard, and even St. Thomas, may possibly have led to unbelieving Rationalism as far-off consequences, they held the mind for a long time in awe-struck submission, and this impression has not yet passed away. The great Pagan proofs for the existence of God were preserved. One was even added, which, in spite of Voltaire's sneer,² has never ceased to have a strong hold upon minds of a certain constitution.

St. Anselm³ was the first to clearly lay down Descartes' famous argument which seeks to prove the existence of God from the fact that we think of Him.

St. Anselm
and Des-
cartes.

Descartes, most probably, was acquainted with the Proslogium in which this opinion is advanced; for Baillet, his biographer, states that St. Thomas was a favourite with this philosopher, and the influence of the Schoolmen is very visible on the whole Cartesian group.

A great boon to theological science has been rendered by the rapid advances lately made in Biblical criticism. So early as the time of Abelard we find important canons laid down. That unfortunate lover and great scholar points out that the language of Holy Scripture was not that of the learned, and that a peculiar difficulty of interpretation

Biblical
criticism.

¹ Tertullian, at an earlier period, certainly looked with little favour on Dialecticians. 'Ipse denique hæreses a philosophia subornantur. . . . Miserum Aristotelem qui illis dialecticam instituit.'

² 'Pour être, il me suffit que vous soyez possible.'

³ The argument in the Monologium is to be found both in St. Augustine and Plato.

arose from this fact.¹ He gives, at the same time, a good many examples of corrupted readings, and says that many books have been placed alongside the inspired text which do not belong to it. These remarks probably contributed to set afloat a tradition of free criticism which has produced such important results in our own time.

Philosophy
in general.

In close, almost inseparable connection with School theology, the controversy on universals ran its stormy course. The extreme Nominalists declared them to be a mere 'flatus vocis,'² the Realists an objective reality. The effect of this question, first raised through a translation of Porphyry by Boethius, on accuracy in the use of words has already been noticed. What the Schoolmen have done for philosophy and literature in general is to show the necessity of assuming a common-sense compromise on this question—which they have apparently exhausted without solving—as a necessary preliminary to further progress. They fought the fight which was inevitable on the subject; we have entered into their labour, and it is our own fault if we fail to profit by it. It is curious how many philosophical extravagances are perpetrated simply from neglecting to take warning from the ludicrous mistakes of the Schoolmen, extravagances which imply the extremes of Nominalism or Realism. Some fall into complete Agnosticism, denying to words any power whatsoever to represent ideas; others blow out with words beautiful but illusive bubble-systems, which last only

Scholastic
extrava-
gances.

¹ Prologue to the *Sic et non*.

² The following sentence, however, which M. Hauréau gives as the last utterance of the Nominalists upon universals, shows a great deal of sense:—
'Est . . . universale vox, vel scriptum, aut quodcumque aliud signum ex institutione, vel voluntario usu, significans plura singularia univoce. Quod tamen signum est res aliqua singularis, et . . . ipsum solum repræsentative est universale, ita quod esse universale nihil aliud est quam repræsentare vel significare plures res singulares univoce.'

until some ruder breath dissolves them. It would be endless to point out how many modern writers belong to Nominalism or Realism, or (as is more common) form a compound of both opinions.¹ Locke, in one passage, reduces universals to pure forms of thought, while Fichte's bold formula—'the subjective produces the objective'—would take in nearly all the opinions of Duns Scotus. It is not long since a renowned German² attributed great efficacy to the simple word—'das Werden'—as an explanation of the genesis of things. Certain invidious critics of Christian proclivities, however—not unacquainted with a philosophy which it was the fashion to stigmatise as dead—pronounced it to be little else than the 'in potentiâ' of the Schoolmen, with no fresh virtue to bridge over the chasm between nothing and something, nor any special mission to occupy the place of God in creation. However this may be, in reviewing the whole subject it is pretty clear that while the old question survives, a great service has been rendered by those men who discussed the subject fully and enabled the world to lay it practically aside. It has never been exactly solved. That it ever will be is uncertain. Probably not until certain thinkers have satisfactorily settled, whether man got his speech from reason or his reason from speech—whether the egg is the product of the bird, or the bird of the egg.

Service of
the School-
men.

It will be perceived that in these considerations no place has as yet been assigned to a very considerable branch of literature. Modern poetry, which is written in another language from that of the Schoolmen, which appeals to different feelings, and is dependent upon a

Poetry.

¹ Cousin in his *Fragments Philosophiques*, pp. 278-9, gives a list of modern writers, showing how far they belonged to the Nominalist and Realist Schools.

² Hegel, in his endeavour to prove the Absolute.

different method, can be said to owe them but little. That little is to be found in substance rather than in style. Dante¹ expounded many Scholastic doctrines, 'con angelica voce in sua favella,' and from his pages their reflections have doubtless fallen on the minds of subsequent writers transfigured and glorified. In him we find mediæval philosophy no longer colourless and stiff under rigid forms, but clothed in all the beauty of poetry and the freshness of a young language. Dante—like St. Thomas whose theology he in great part adopted—while not neglecting the particular, endeavoured above all things to grasp the general. In the 'Divine Comedy' there is an attempt at a universal history. No great figure which passed across the coloured glass of Time, from Adam to John XXII., has escaped the piercing eyes of the great Florentine. Political and religious revolutions are allegorically represented. Yet (says M. Ozanam) beneath all these vicissitudes and external changes there is unity. The great human family exists for ever even in its individuals. In the depths of the infernal regions, on the Via Dolorosa of Purgatory, amid the glory of heaven, it is man that we meet—man, fallen, expiating his offences, raised again, but still man. Finally, towards the end of the poem, when the curtain rises for the last time, we see the Eternal Word united with the human nature. This is nothing less than a philosophy of humanity which is also a philosophy of history. Dante's poem was principally founded on the main ideas of the systems of St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Bonaventura.² He dealt with them lavishly, taking the broadest outlines. In

¹ M. Ozanam, in his *Dante*, gives an account of that poet's connection with Scholasticism (troisième partie, chaps. iii. and iv.).

² Ozanam, *Dante*, part iii. chap. iii.

this manner he avoided some of their worst faults, and was not afraid to throw in a bold stroke of his own on occasions. For instance, feeling the want of a symmetrical construction, he supposed the existence of unknown lands in another hemisphere. Thus Dante has undoubtedly done much to spread Scholastic ideas, throwing away the worser part, and sending forth the better to speak to the world in such winning accents that men could not choose but listen. This influence has indeed been transmitted through poetry, but, as it can hardly be said to have affected that branch of literature more than any other, enough has been said here upon a very interesting subject.

An attempt has been made with some show of plausibility¹ to connect Jordano Bruno with Shakespeare as his philosophical master, and it is known that the former visited England during the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Certain it is that the dramatic writers of that golden era found congenial materials in those mysterious tales of magic and necromancy which gathered thick around illustrious names which had still power to move the popular imagination. 'Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay' by Greene is an example of the dramatic use of a legend belonging to the heroic age of Scholasticism. Marlowe's 'Faustus' is a very similar creation. The hero of this tragical history, 'glutted with learning's golden gifts,' surfeits upon 'curst necromancy,' and exclaims in an ecstasy, 'Sweet Analytics! 'tis thou hast ravished me.' The distinction must ever be kept in mind between these majestic personages, not without a certain unholy grandeur in their inordinate love of knowledge, and the miserable beings depicted by the morose imagination of

Jordano
Bruno and
Shake-
speare.

Greene and
Marlowe.

¹ William König, in the *Shakespeare Jahrbuch*, 1876. Also by Benno Tschischwitz, in his *Shakespeare's Hamlet*.

northern Calvinism. It is, perhaps, from these illustrious connections in the literary world that the Prince of Darkness himself gradually loses his attributes of mere physical deformity and horror, until at length he seems 'no less than archangel ruined.'

Chaucer
and Oc-
cleve.

Hymno-
logy.

Chaucer constantly alludes to Scholastic subjects, and some affectionate lines by Occleve on his old master inscribed in a volume of the 'De Regimine Principum' by Egidius Colonna, are probably in remembrance of mutual studies.¹ Another author took in hand the translation of Aristotle into English verse, in imitation no doubt of the Latin metrical versions made by the Schoolmen.² How far such a connection influenced our literature, then in its beginning, it is hard even to guess approximately. To the mediæval monks hymnology is much indebted, and they contributed towards the development of rhyme. That form of dramatic wit in which the Elizabethan clowns delighted, and which consisted in grotesque and subtle distortions of words and arguments, may perhaps have been suggested by the elaborate machinery of the Schools. Molière later on found it certainly an excellent subject for his satire. Yet still we must repeat that the direct influence on modern poetry has been but small. It has been formed by the national language and romances, coming in contact with the golden songs of Greece and Rome (or at least with the spirit of them which was abroad during the Renaissance), rather than by a philosophy singularly devoid of

¹ This was an English metrical version, by Occleve himself, of the *De Reg. Prin.*, and upon the margin of one of the MSS. of the *De Reg. Prin.*, now in the British Museum, he has painted his famous little coloured portrait of Chaucer.

² One whole book of Gower's *Confessio Amantis* is devoted to an exposition of Aristotelian philosophy.

that passionate expression which is not wholly wanting in any science.¹

But, it may be said, poetry, philosophy, politics, theology, are indeed very important elements, but they are not the characteristics of the latest modern literature. It is really the numerous books of physical science, based on the inductive method of Francis Bacon, which are the peculiar product of the nineteenth century, and of which it has good reason to be proud. Any influence which does not include these can be but very partial.

Scholasticism and the latest literature.

With regard to the inductive method itself, which has done so much for the human race—‘*pronubâ divina bonitate*’—there are appearances of it not merely as it must have existed from time immemorial, but in a form clearly defined, and most nearly resembling even in expression the ‘*Instauratio Magna*.’ Roger Bacon, a Schoolman, having his own opinions on the subject of universals, struck the first notes, of which it is hard to believe from internal evidence that some distant sound had not reached the ears of his illustrious namesake through the mysterious ducts of thought. Roger Bacon² attributes the languor of the human mind, in his own days, to four causes—respect for authority, for customs, deference to the opinions of the vulgar, and to the pride of false science. Francis Bacon was, then, announcing opinions essentially held by his predecessor in these the opening lines of his preface:—

The inductive method.

‘*Videntur nobis homines nec opes nec vires suas bene*

¹ Of one theory, intimately connected with poetry, there is a very curious anticipation in Bernard de Chartres’ *Commentary on the Æneid*. This writer sees, in the episode of Juno and her nymphs, symbols of meteorological phenomena. This is a very kindred thought to the one which would explain the books of Homer as a solar myth.

² Rémusat, *Preface to Bacon*.

nôsse, verum de illis majora quam par est, de his minora credere.' As to Francis Bacon later on, so to Roger Bacon in the Thirteenth Century did a reform appear urgent. To this end experience is the great means—not only natural experience, but the science of experimentation. Experience alone proves or verifies scientific propositions, and manifest facts which no reasoning could reveal. It is difficult, indeed, not to recognise the inductive method here. Bacon did not stand alone. He tells us of certain mysterious personages who were his masters in the art of experimentation. From this it may probably be conjectured that he only formed one of a school, whose other members—not unwisely—considered it inexpedient to make their labours public, and so died unknown and unpersecuted. It is, perhaps, wrong to lay much stress on what may after all be but striking similarities. It must, however, be admitted that the similarity is so striking as almost to preclude the idea of mere accident. Francis Bacon slightly mentions his ill-starred predecessor, in a manner which would lead us to imagine that he had not read his work through. It does not therefore follow that much may not have reached him indirectly—nor has it been universally observed that authors are willing to acknowledge their deepest obligations.

The origin
of man.

Much more directly, however, has Scholasticism taken part in the debates on the last theory of the origin of man, founded on observations in the physical world. Mr. Darwin has come to us with a theory so prodigal of time that to it 'a thousand years are but as yesterday,' and which purports to account for our higher attributes as well as our physical formation. Some day too, as it has evolved from the protoplasm man with 'those thoughts of his that wander through eternity,' it may bridge over the chasm between inorganic matter and life. Have so many

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centuries of theology produced no fine distinctions, no subtle thoughts, which may yet be drawn from their cloistral seclusion into the arena of modern controversy? To this question an affirmative answer may be given. A class of writers has arisen who wish to explain and modify the evolution theory, so as to bring it into harmony with Christianity. One author in particular¹ has made great use of Scholastic terms. It is not surprising to find that he belongs to that Church in which St. Thomas thought and wrote, and in which there has always been one party at least prepared for the exigencies of their times. So the old weapons in the vast arsenal of mediæval thought have been taken down from the walls, and furbished up for immediate use. It is more particularly in the philosophic embodiment of physical science that the doctrines of the Schoolmen play an important part. The attempt is to show (whether rightly or wrongly does not come within the compass of our enquiry) that the theory which Mr. Darwin has stamped with his name can be made to agree, through principles already laid down, with a perfectly orthodox belief in creation.²

Suarez believed in a derivative creation by God of forms, not as existing but 'in potentiâ.' He even points out a certain form of evolution, as the result of putrefaction and natural causes. Speaking of such animals as the mule, the leopard, the lynx, after stating that individuals of the kind must have been created from the beginning, he remarks: '*Nihilominus contrarium censeo esse probabilis . . . quia hujusmodi species animalium sufficienter continebantur potentialiter in illis individuis diversarum specierum, ex quorum commixtione generantur, et ideo non fuit necessarium aliqua eorum individua ab auctore*

¹ Mr. St. George Mivart.

² *Lessons from Nature*, by St. George Mivart, chap. xiv.

naturæ immediate produci.’¹ The author expressly defends himself from the absurd imputation that he believed Suarez or others of his class to have anticipated a doctrine which is the result of subsequent researches. All that he wishes to advance is that these writers have laid down principles such as can perfectly harmonise with the requirements of modern science. This use of primary and secondary creation is only one example of a quantity of similar distinctions employed with the same conciliatory purpose. If the position of Mr. St. George Mivart is tenable, science has no cause to complain, Christianity much to rejoice. If untenable, it is still an example of the continuity of Scholasticism.

Conclusion.

Finally, while remembering how joyously and with how great a certainty of success these writers set forward to explore the new world of mind which lay before them ‘fresh as a banner bright unfurled,’ it may be well to reflect that our learning too may some day be consigned to the place of outworn faces. The historian may, therefore, dwell more lovingly on their excellences, and bring into less exaggerated prominence their subtlety and illiberality. The Christian, certainly, should be the last to see in their laborious roads nothing but the dark and loathsome windings of those sepulchral galleries in the Pyramids, which lead nowhere; or to blame them for not even having proved that the problem on which they were engaged was insoluble. Ought we not rather to rejoice that the writings of the Schoolmen are once more employed on their former task of reconciling Science and Faith, and that they may again make it possible for the philosopher to say in the words of Abelard :

‘Non sic esse philosophus, ut recalcitrem Paulo; non sic esse Aristotelis, ut secludar a Christo’?

¹ Suarez, lib. ii. *de Opere Sex Dierum*, c. x. n. 12.

